

I. Amendments to the Claims

This listing of claims replaces without prejudice all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A relay unit incorporated in a gaming system and connecting one or a plurality of manipulation terminals or external storage units to a single port of an entertainment apparatus having at least a first mode and a second mode as operation modes; wherein

the entertainment apparatus reads information from a recording medium, determines an operation mode based on the read information, operates in the determined operation mode, generates an operation mode selection signal in accordance with the determined operation mode, and outputs the generated operation mode selection signal to the relay unit;

the relay unit is located outside the entertainment apparatus and includes:

a main body connector for detachably connecting the relay unit to the entertainment apparatus;

at least one or a plurality of controller connectors for detachably connecting the one or the plurality of manipulation terminals;

a first relay processing unit;

a second relay processing unit; and

a control signal generator;

the first relay processing unit carries out relay processing for the first mode between the entertainment apparatus and the one or the plurality of manipulation terminals or the external storage units;

the second relay processing unit carries out relay processing for the second mode between the entertainment apparatus and the one or the plurality of manipulation terminals or the external storage units;

the relay unit receives the selection signal from the entertainment apparatus via the main body connector;

the control signal generator operates ~~one of the first and second relay units~~ unit to carry out the relay processing for the first mode based on when the relay unit receives the received selection signal in accordance with the first mode;

the control signal generator operates the second relay unit to carry out the relay processing for the second mode when the relay unit receives the selection signal in accordance with the second mode; and

the first and second modes are different gaming protocols.

2. (Original) The relay unit according to claim 1, wherein in at least either the case of changing from the first mode to the second mode or changing from the second mode to the first mode, a period in which neither relay processing for the first mode nor relay processing for the second mode is carried out for mode switching is provided.

3. (Original) The relay unit according to claim 2, wherein the duration of the period in which neither relay processing for the first mode nor relay processing for the second mode is carried out is defined according to a communication procedure with the entertainment apparatus.

4. (Canceled)

5. (Previously Amended) The relay unit according to claim 1, wherein

the control signal generator is configured to generate a first control signal to operate the first relay processing unit and a second control signal to operate the second relay processing unit in conformity with the selection signal.

6. (Original) The relay unit according to claim 5, wherein the control signal generator comprises a pulse generator configured to generate pulses of a predetermined width when changing from the first mode to the second mode, or from the second mode to the first mode.

7. (Previously Amended) The relay unit according to claim 1, wherein

the second mode is a compatible mode for insuring compatibility with other entertainment apparatuses of other models.

8. (Canceled)

9. (Currently Amended) A communication system in a gaming system, comprising an entertainment apparatus having at least a first mode and a second mode as operation modes, and a relay unit connecting one or a plurality of manipulation terminals or external storage units to a single port of the entertainment apparatus; wherein

the entertainment apparatus reads information from a recording medium, determines an operation mode based on the read information, operates in the determined operation mode.

generates an operation mode selection signal in accordance with the determined operation mode, and outputs the generated operation mode selection signal to the relay unit;

the relay unit is located outside the entertainment apparatus and includes:

a main body connector for detachably connecting the relay unit to the entertainment apparatus;

at least one or a plurality of controller connectors for detachably connecting the one or the plurality of manipulation terminals;

a first relay processing unit;

a second relay processing unit; and

a control signal generator;

the first relay processing unit carries out relay processing for the first mode between the entertainment apparatus and the one or the plurality of manipulation terminals or the external storage units;

the second relay processing unit carries out relay processing for the second mode between the entertainment apparatus and the one or the plurality of manipulation terminals or the external storage units;

the relay unit receives the selection signal from the entertainment apparatus via the main body connector;

the control signal generator operates ~~one of the first and second relay unit units~~ to carry out the relay processing for the first mode when the relay unit receives based on the received selection signal in accordance with the second mode; and

the first and second modes are different gaming protocols.

10. (Currently Amended) A communication method for connecting one or a plurality of manipulation terminals or external storage units to a single port of an entertainment apparatus in a gaming system having at least a first mode and a second mode as operation modes via a relay unit, wherein the relay unit is located outside the entertainment apparatus and includes a main body connector for detachably connecting the relay unit to the entertainment apparatus, at least one or a plurality of controller connectors for detachably connecting the one or the plurality of manipulation terminals, first and second relay processing units, and a control signal generator, said communication method comprising:

a step of reading information from a recording medium;

a step of determining an operation mode of the entertainment apparatus based on the read information;

a step of generating a selection signal in accordance with that determination result;

a step of transmitting the selection signal to the relay unit, which are carried by the entertainment apparatus;

a step of receiving the selection signal from the entertainment apparatus by the relay unit;

a step of relaying for the first mode when the received selection signal corresponds to a signal for the first mode by the first relay processing unit; and

a step of relaying for the second mode when the received selection signal corresponds to a signal for the second mode by the second relay processing unit,

a step of operating ~~one of the first and second~~ relay units to carry out the relaying when the relay unit receives based on the selection signal in accordance with the first mode by the control signal generator;

a step of operating the second relay unit to carry out the relay processing for the second mode when the relay unit receives the selection signal in accordance with the second mode; and
wherein the first and second modes are different gaming protocols.

11. (Original) The communication method according to claim 10, wherein the step of determining includes setting operation mode to the first mode when the recording medium is removed, and generating a selection signal corresponding to the first mode.

12. (Previously Amended) The communication method according to claim 10, further comprising a step of resetting both the first relay processing unit and the second relay processing unit for a predetermined period, which is carried out by the relay unit, when the selection signal switches from a signal corresponding to the first mode to a signal corresponding to the second mode, or vice versa.

13. (Previously Amended) The communication method according to claim 10, wherein the step of determining includes setting operation mode to the first mode when power of the entertainment apparatus is applied, and generating a selection signal corresponding to the first mode, said communication method further comprises a step of resetting both the first relay processing unit and the second relay processing unit for a predetermined period, which is carried out by the relay unit, when power of the entertainment apparatus is applied and a new selection signal corresponding to the first mode is generated.

14. (Canceled)

15. (New) The relay unit according to claim 1 wherein the first relay processing unit is a first multitap IC and second relay processing unit is a second multitap IC.

16. (New) The relay unit according to claim 15 wherein the first multitap IC and the second multitap IC each have at least one bus switch electrically coupled thereto for communicating signals between the one or plurality of controllers and the first multitap IC and/or the second multitap IC.

17. (New) The relay unit according to claim 16 wherein signals between the one or plurality of controllers and a memory card may be processed by either the first or second multitap IC in accordance with a control signal from the control signal generator.

18. (New) The communication system according to claim 9 wherein the first relay processing unit is a first multitap IC and second relay processing unit is a second multitap IC.

19. (New) The communication system according to claim 18 wherein the first multitap IC and the second multitap IC each have at least one bus switch electrically coupled thereto for communicating signals between the one or plurality of controllers and the first multitap IC and/or the second multitap IC.

20. (New) The communication system according to claim 19 wherein signals between the one or plurality of controllers and a memory card may be processed by either the first or second multitap IC in accordance with a control signal from the control signal generator.

21. (New) The communication method according to claim 10 wherein the first and second relay processing units are first and second multitap ICs.

22. (New) The communication method according to claim 21 wherein the first and second multitap ICs each have at least one bus switch electrically coupled thereto for communicating signals between the one or plurality of controllers and first and/or second multitap ICs.

23. (New) The communication method according to claim 22 wherein signals between the one or plurality of controllers and a memory card may be processed by either the first or second multitap IC in accordance with a control signal from the control signal generator.